

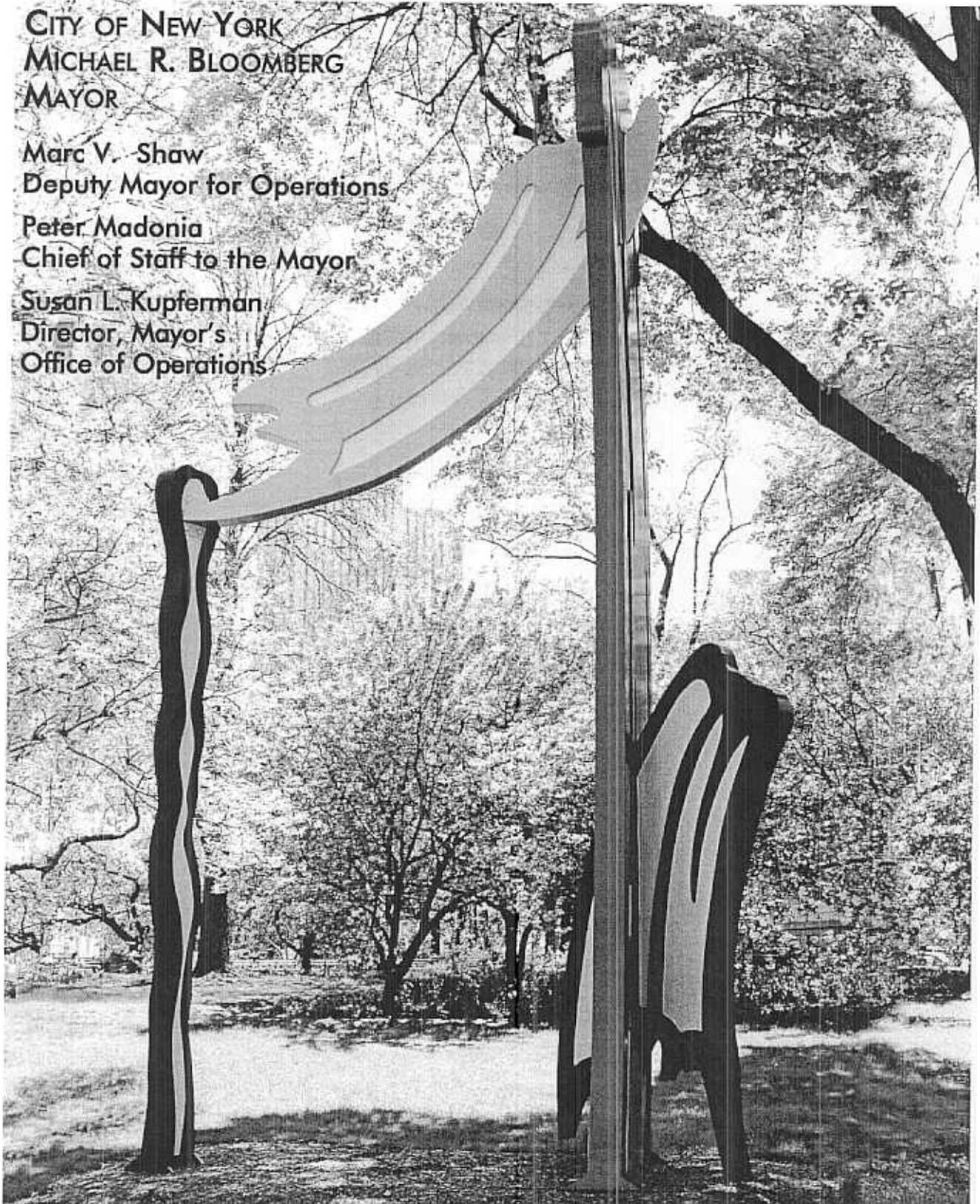
# THE MAYOR'S MANAGEMENT REPORT FISCAL 2004

CITY OF NEW YORK  
MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG  
MAYOR

Marc V. Shaw  
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September 2004





# ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

John B. Mattingly, Commissioner  
nyc.gov

## Key Public Service Areas

- ✓ Protect children from abuse and neglect.
- ✓ Provide preventive and foster care services to meet the needs of children and families.
- ✓ Ensure timely reunification or adoption services based on the needs of the child.
- ✓ Ensure access to quality, safe child care and Head Start services in communities.

## Critical Objectives

- Respond within 24 hours to every allegation of abuse and neglect and perform thorough investigations of allegations.
- Increase access to quality, neighborhood-based services to prevent placement or re-entry into foster care.
- Maximize placement of children in foster homes within their own neighborhoods.
- Maximize placement of children in foster care with family members and placement of children with their siblings as appropriate.
- Enhance family involvement in service planning for children in foster care.
- Provide a safe, stable foster care environment for children.
- Decrease the length of time children remain in foster care.
- Ensure availability and accessibility of child care services in communities.

## Scope of Agency Operations

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and ensures the well-being of New York City's children and families. ACS investigated child abuse and neglect reports involving approximately 79,000 children and provided contract preventive services to 30,033 children. ACS provides direct foster care and adoption services, as well as contractual services for over 22,000 children through approximately 50 foster care agencies citywide. The Agency also administers 230 Head Start sites and enrolls 60,555 children in child care programs through contracted providers or child care vouchers.

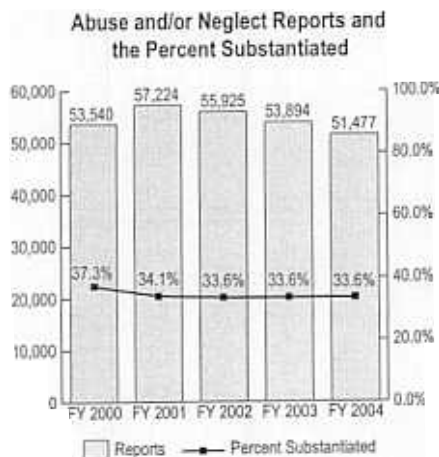
## Performance Highlights

- ACS continues to improve on its ability to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect within the State-mandated 24 hours; however, the proportion of children who are subjects of repeat allegations increased.
- The decreasing trend in the foster care population was maintained in Fiscal 2004, with fewer children re-entering care once discharged to their families.
- There was improvement in ACS' ability to place children in foster care within their own community district. However, the increasing number of large sibling groups needing foster care has had a negative impact on placing children in their own borough, and placing sibling groups together in the same foster household.
- As the foster care population falls, fewer adoptions are finalized. However, a higher proportion of children in ACS' care classified as adoptable were adopted, and at a slightly quicker pace.
- The utilization rate for child care programs administered or funded by ACS increased, but total enrollment declined. ACS will add additional child care slots in the coming year. HeadStart enrollment and utilization increased.

## Performance Report

- ✓ Protect children from abuse and neglect.

**Respond within 24 hours to every allegation of abuse and neglect and perform thorough investigations of allegations.** ACS continued to show slight improvement in its ability to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect within 24 hours, from 96.2 percent in Fiscal 2003 to 96.9 percent in Fiscal 2004, but remains below the 100 percent target set by the State. The target remains difficult to reach due to factors such as incorrect addresses and unavailable family members. The number of abuse or neglect reports reported to ACS decreased and the percentage of substantiated reports remained the same.





The percent of children in completed investigations who are the subject of a repeat allegation within a year, which had fallen from 18.3 percent in Fiscal 2002 to 17.5 percent in Fiscal 2003, rose again to 18.6 percent in Fiscal 2004. The proportion of these repeat reports that were substantiated increased from 9.3 percent to 10 percent, equaling the annual target.

Web Maps



Performance Statistics	A c t u a l					T a r g e t	
	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	Preliminary FY04	Updated FY05
Abuse and/or neglect reports responded to within 24 hours of receipt from the State Central Registry (%)	97.8%	97.0%	95.8%	96.2%	96.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Children in completed investigations with repeat investigations within a year (%)	16.8%	17.7%	18.3%	17.5%	18.6%	*	*
Children in substantiated investigations with repeat substantiated investigations within a year (%) (Preliminary)	8.6%	8.9%	10.0%	9.3%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%

☎ 311 related

Bold - indicates revisions from the January 2004 MMR

"NA" - means Not Available in this report

- ✓ Provide preventive and foster care services to meet the needs of children and families.

**Increase access to quality, neighborhood-based services to prevent placement or re-entry into foster care.** While the number of children receiving contract preventive services has increased by more than one quarter since ACS' Neighborhood Based Services initiative began in Fiscal 2000, the number of children served in Fiscal 2004 fell by one percent compared with Fiscal 2003, to 30,033. The decrease was due to program closures. ACS is currently working to reallocate those program slots to other providers. With the reallocation of slots, ACS expects to show an increase in the number of children served by preventive providers for Fiscal 2005. At the same time, the positive trend of declining foster care populations has continued. Placements of children into foster care decreased in Fiscal 2004, including new placements into care, which declined 18 percent. The average foster care population fell by 14 percent, to 22,082, and has declined by 36 percent over the last five years. Fewer children are returning to foster care soon after leaving; the percent of children in foster care who are discharged to their families and re-enter foster care within a year of discharge fell from 9.2 percent in Fiscal 2003 to 8.6 percent for Fiscal 2004.

**Maximize placement of children in foster homes within their own neighborhoods.** The Neighborhood Based Services Initiative aims to minimize the disruption that children who enter foster care often experience. A key component is to place children in foster care within their communities. The percent of children placed in their own community district increased slightly in Fiscal 2004, to 23.4 percent, meeting the annual target. However, the percent of children placed within their home borough upon admission to foster care fell from 74.9 percent to 72.6 percent. A reason for the decline is a lack of appropriate vacancies within the borough of origin, particularly for placements of multiple siblings. Additionally, the blackout of August 2003 caused disruptions of up to three weeks to the ACS online placement systems; the percent of in-borough placements for August 2003 was 10 percent lower than that for August 2002.

**Maximize placement of children in foster care with family members and placement of children with their siblings as appropriate.** In an effort to further reduce the trauma of entering foster care and to preserve family ties, ACS strives to place children with their relatives and, when possible, to place sibling groups together in the same facility. The percentage of children entering foster care who were placed with relatives remained virtually unchanged from Fiscal 2003 at 19.4 percent; however, the proportion of siblings who are placed simultaneously in the same foster home decreased by 2.6 percentage points during the same period to 87.1 percent.



**Enhance family involvement in service planning for children in foster care.** ACS promotes parental involvement in the foster care decision-making process from the time the child is removed from the home to the time the child is discharged from foster care. Within five days of the child's removal from the home, Child Safety Conferences are held, which begin the process of planning for the child and family. In Fiscal 2004, the percent of parents attending these 72-Hour Child Safety Conferences increased 3.4 percentage points to 70.7 percent. After a child has been in care for 90 days, ACS begins to conduct six month Service Plan Reviews, which are held throughout the child's stay in care. These are held with the parents, the service providers and all involved parties to focus on needed services for the child and family, to expedite discharge from care, and to achieve permanency. In Fiscal 2004, the attendance rate for parents attending Service Plan Reviews was 49 percent.

During the time the child remains in foster care, consistent contact with parents and siblings is encouraged. During Fiscal 2004, the percent of children in foster care receiving bi-weekly visits from their siblings increased slightly to 71.3 percent, while the percent receiving bi-weekly visits from a parent or guardian fell by two percentage points.

**Provide a safe, stable foster care environment for children.** Although ACS attempts to maximize stability in foster care through the best initial placements, transfers between facilities are often necessary to meet children's individual needs. The percent of children in foster care who were transferred two or more times while in care increased from 38.3 percent in Fiscal 2003 to 41.2 percent in Fiscal 2004. The transfer rate has climbed from 35.2 percent in Fiscal 2000, when data was first collected. The increase in the transfer rate can be attributed to the increased proportion of adolescents in care, many of whom have been in care for long periods of time and are more likely to require changes in their foster care facility to meet their changing needs.

In Fiscal 2004, the total number of abuse and neglect reports for children in foster care and child care fell by 9.4 percent from Fiscal 2003; reports fell by 10 percent for children in foster care, and 7 percent for children in child care. During this same period, the percent of abuse and neglect reports for children in foster care that were substantiated decreased, while increasing for children in child care.

In Fiscal 2004, ACS restructured the daily rate paid to contract agencies to operate foster boarding homes to reflect program performance. Agencies receive incremental increases from the base rate according to their performance on the Evaluation and Quality Improvement Protocol (EQUIP), with high performing agencies receiving the highest rates. EQUIP is a comprehensive process that evaluates the quality of services provided to children and families, as well as the programs and agencies that provide these services. The usage of EQUIP scores as an indicator of performance and determining factor for administrative rates ensures agency accountability and improves the quality of services to children. In Fiscal 2004, the average daily cost of foster boarding home services, combining contract and directly-provided services, increased by 4.6 percent over the Fiscal 2003 level, to roughly \$49 per child. Foster boarding home services are provided by a recruited, certified foster parent who cares for the child in his/her home. During the same period, average daily combined costs for congregate care services at the moderate and intermediate levels of need increased by 4 percent and 3.5 percent respectively over Fiscal 2003, but the cost to provide the most severe level of congregate care decreased by 3.3 percent, to roughly \$175 per child. Congregate care settings are residences in which older children live under the care of trained staff.



Performance Statistics	Actual					Target		
	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY04 Preliminary	FY05 Preliminary	FY05 Updated
Children receiving contract preventive services	23,462	23,855	28,596	30,368	30,033	*	*	*
Children in foster care (average)	34,354	30,858	28,215	25,622	22,082	*	*	*
All children entering foster care (Preliminary)	10,137	8,909	8,498	6,946	6,227	*	*	*
- New children entering foster care (Preliminary)	8,065	6,889	6,545	5,634	4,627	*	*	*
Children who re-enter foster care within a year of discharge to family (%) (Preliminary)	10.1%	8.6%	9.3%	9.2%	8.6%	8.6%	8.6%	8.6%
Children placed in foster care in their borough (%) (Preliminary)	44.9%	57.5%	64.6%	74.9%	72.6%	*	*	*
Children placed in foster care in their community district (%) (Preliminary)	7.7%	13.7%	18.2%	22.1%	23.4%	23.0%	23.0%	23.0%
Children entering foster care who are placed with relatives (%) (Preliminary)	16.0%	19.9%	22.5%	19.2%	19.4%	*	*	*
Siblings placed simultaneously in the same foster home (%) (Preliminary)	80.6%	84.7%	84.1%	89.7%	87.1%	*	*	*
Separated siblings in foster care receiving biweekly visits from their other siblings (%) (Preliminary)				70.8%	71.3%	*	*	*
Parents or caregivers attending Post Removal 72 Hour Child Safety Conferences (%)	67.0%	68.0%	66.9%	67.3%	70.7%	*	*	*
Children with parent(s) attending 6 month Service Plan Reviews for children with goal of returning home (%) (Preliminary)			50.0%	50.7%	49.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Children in foster care receiving biweekly visits from a parent or guardian (%) (Preliminary)				67%	65.0%			
Children in foster care who had two or more transfers from one facility to another (%)	35.2%	36.8%	36.7%	38.3%	41.2%			
Abuse and/or neglect reports for children in foster care and child care	1,900	1,976	1,767	1,615	1,463			
- for children in foster care								
Abuse and/or neglect reports for children in foster care and child care that are substantiated (%) (Preliminary)	30.8%	24.9%	23.6%	20.3%	18.9%	*	*	*
- for children in foster care (%) (Preliminary)				21.6%	19.2%	*	*	*
- for children in child care (%) (Preliminary)				16.8%	17.4%			
Cost per foster care case (\$)								
- Congregate care by level of need								
- Level 1				\$126.19	\$131.34	*		
- Level 2								

**Bold** - indicates revisions from the January 2004 MMR

- ✓ Ensure timely reunification or adoption services based on the needs of the child.

**Decrease the length of time children remain in foster care.** ACS' primary mission is to ensure children have a safe, stable and nurturing environment in which to grow. One objective of this goal is to return children home from foster care as quickly as possible. In Fiscal 2004, the preliminary median length of stay in foster care for children who entered care for the first time and who were returned to a parent was 7.6 months, up from 6.8 months in Fiscal 2003 and substantially slower than the target of 5.5 months. At the same time, 49.3 percent of these children were returned home within 12 months of placement into foster care, virtually unchanged from Fiscal 2003 and exceeding the annual target of 45 percent.





In Fiscal 2004, the number of children adopted was 2,735, a slight decline from the previous year and short of the annual target of 2,900. The indicator does not reflect the agency's success in increasing the rate of adoption for eligible children. In Fiscal 2004, ACS completed adoptions for 68 percent of children in care who were freed for adoption, marking the highest rate in ACS history. The reason for the smaller number of finalized adoptions is a direct result of the dramatic decline in the foster care population, and thus the number of children eligible for adoption. Given these downward trends, ACS is revising down its Fiscal 2005 target for finalized adoptions from 2,900 to 2,500. The new target would require ACS to complete adoptions for upwards of 76 percent of foster care children freed for adoption. The median length of stay of children in foster care before they are adopted fell slightly to just over 61 months, and the proportion of children adopted within 24 months rose slightly to 24.3 percent. The average time to complete an adoption has remained between three and four years since Fiscal 2000.

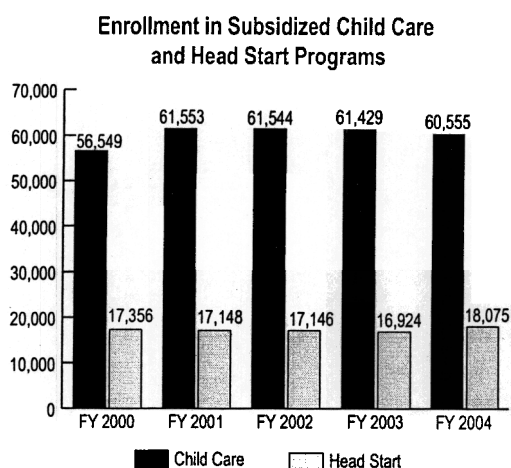
Performance Statistics	A c t u a l					T a r g e t		
	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	Preliminary FY04	Preliminary FY05	Updated FY05
Median length of stay for children entering foster care for the first time who are returned to parent (months)	6.4	5.9	6.9	6.8	7.6	5.5	5.5	5.5
Children returned to parent(s) within 12 months (%) <i>(Preliminary)</i>	52.4%	49.2%	48.4%	49.2%	49.3%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
Children adopted	3,148	2,715	2,695	2,793	2,735	2,900	2,900	2,500
Median length of stay in foster care before child is adopted (months)	60.2	58.3	62.2	64.3	61.5	50.0	50.0	50.0
Children adopted within 24 months from the time that adoption is decided as appropriate (%) <i>(Preliminary)</i>	26.2%	31.3%	25.1%	24.1%	24.3%	*	*	*
Average time to complete adoption (years)	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0

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✓ Ensure access to quality, safe child care and Head Start services in communities.

**Ensure availability and accessibility of child care services in communities.** As shown in the accompanying chart, the number of children enrolled in ACS' administered subsidized child care programs decreased from 61,429 in Fiscal 2003 to 60,555 in Fiscal 2004, because some school-aged children are now served in programs administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development as part of the City's restructuring of out-of-school time for youngsters. At the same time, ACS expanded contracts to increase subsidized child care by 2,642 slots.

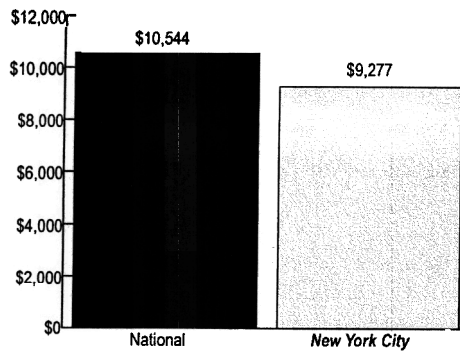


The percent of budgeted child care slots that were filled increased from 96.8 percent in Fiscal 2003 to 97.4 percent in Fiscal 2004, but fell short of target. ACS is taking steps to increase enrollment, meeting with agencies that are performing significantly below capacity and setting enrollment targets by specific dates. ACS is also planning to reallocate child care slots based on need, increasing available slots in community districts with greater demand. To determine where reallocation is appropriate, ACS has been tracking vacancies and enrollment for all programs, including special monitoring of programs with enrollment below 85 percent of capacity.

Enrollment in Head Start, a federally funded child care program, was 18,075 in Fiscal 2004, compared to 16,924 in Fiscal 2003. The percent of budgeted Head Start slots that were filled increased from 89 percent to 96.6 percent, exceeding the 95 percent annual target. Head Start programs have historically been part-time child care. As more parents started entering the workforce, the demand for full time service increased. In Fiscal 2004, ACS began converting part-time Head Start programs to full-time.



Head Start Program Average Cost per Child  
(Federal FY' 02; NYC FY' 04)



Source: Administration for Children and Families,  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The City's payments for child care may be made through contracts directly with a provider or through vouchers issued to the parent or guardian of the child. The cost per child care slot provided through vouchers decreased for group and family child care in Fiscal 2004. The cost per contracted slot also decreased for family child care, but increased for group child care. Group child care is staffed by certified teachers and family child care is delivered by a registered provider in his/her home. Costs per slot for the Head Start program increased by 5.9 percent in Fiscal 2004, but were 12 percent lower than the national average during federal Fiscal Year 2002, as seen in the accompanying chart.

Performance Statistics	Actual					Target		
	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY04 Preliminary	FY05 Updated	FY05
Child care capacity filled (%)	98.9%	98.3%	98.1%	96.8%	97.4%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%
<b>Head Start capacity filled (%)</b>								
<b>Cost per child care slot</b>								
- Group child care (voucher) (\$)			\$5,976	\$6,677	\$6,511	*	*	*
- Family child care (voucher) (\$)			\$4,874	\$5,750	\$5,710	*	*	*
- Group child care (contract) (\$)			\$8,808	\$8,522	\$8,840	*	*	*
- Family child care (contract) (\$)			\$6,754	\$6,320	\$5,775	*	*	*
Cost per Head Start slot (\$)			\$7,945	\$8,762	\$9,277	*	*	*

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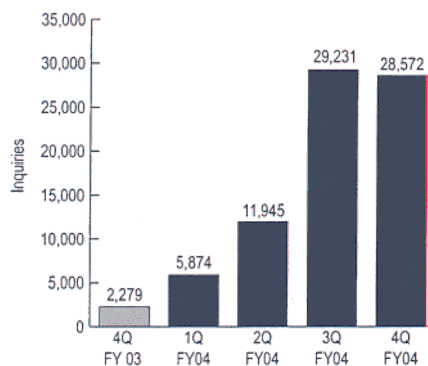
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## Inquiries Received by 311 Citizen Service Center



The 311 Citizen Service Center received 75,622 ACS-related inquiries in Fiscal 2004. Agency performance measures related to the top inquiries in the table below are noted with a "311-related" icon - a small telephone symbol - in the Performance Statistics tables in this chapter.

Citizen Inquiries Received by 311



Top 5 ACS - related inquiries:	Total	% of ACS Inquiries
Child Care Eligibility Appointment	16,594	21.9%
Child Care Recertification	3,883	5.1%
Become a Foster Parent	2,335	3.1%





## Agency Resources

	A c t u a						Preliminary	Updated
Agency Resources	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY04¹	FY05¹	FY05²
Expenditures (\$ millions)	\$2,174.3	\$2,256.2	\$2,375.1	\$2,345.5	\$2,332.0	\$2,238.7	\$2,079.5	\$2,184.0
Revenues (\$ millions)	\$21.8	\$19.5	\$27.3	\$17.2	\$4.4	\$15.9	\$13.2	\$3.4
Personnel	New Method		7,953	6,895	6,343	6,582	6,711	6,688
Overtime earned (\$000)	\$20,633	\$25,914	\$28,555	\$11,245	\$11,680	*	*	*
Human services contract budget (\$ millions)	\$1,295.2	\$1,343.7	\$1,368.3	\$1,323.7	\$1,308.5	\$1,244.8	\$1,101.9	\$1,185.6
Work Experience Program (WEP) participants assigned	423	189	118	127	188	*	*	*

<sup>1</sup> January 2004 Financial Plan <sup>2</sup> Authorized Budget Level **Bold** indicates additions or revisions from the January 2004 MMR "NA" means Not Available in this report

## Noteworthy Changes, Additions or Deletions

- ACS has revised the Fiscal 2005 target for 'Children adopted' from 2,900 to 2,500. The lower target is more reflective of the declining number of children in foster care, and thus the smaller number of foster care children eligible for adoption.